Travel Office

Travel Authorization Process
Presented by Finance Division
UHCL Travel Office

The UHCL Travel Office is a part of Accounts Payable, a department in the Finance Division.

Mission Statement

The Travel Office is committed to supporting the educational mission of the university through exceptional customer service to the university community, providing prompt and accurate reimbursement processing, and ensuring compliance with UHCL, UH System, and State of Texas guidelines.
It always begins with a TEAM!
Objectives

- Travel Authorization Process Overview
- Travel Authorization Form
- Travel Authorization Instructions
- Encumbering Funds on a Travel Purchase Order
- Travel Purchase Order Instructions
- Travel Expense Report
- FAQs
- Resources
- Contact Information
The Travel Authorization Process

Effective for Travel
Sept. 1, 2020
The Travel Authorization Process

• The process changed in an effort to expedite the travel reimbursement time.
The Travel Authorization Process

• Travel Authorization (TA) forms are required prior to traveling to guarantee that UHCL has approved the travel.
The Travel Authorization Process

• Departments are responsible for processing, encumbering and electronically storing the approved TAs.
The Travel Authorization Process

- Encumbering the funds for travel ensures the availability of funds and coverage. Do not use state funds for travel.
The Travel Authorization Process

- A department staff member must be designated as a “Buyer” with the role of “Creator” in PeopleSoft Finance
- Instructions to request PS access
- PS Security Access form
The Travel Authorization Process

- Encumber funds on a Travel PO in Business Unit TR759

- Travel PO Instructions are available
The only time the Travel Office will need a copy of the TA is when airfare purchase, hotel travel card, or car rental is needed.
The traveler or the traveler’s department fills out the TA with the department filling out the “For Departmental Use Only” section.
TA Form Tips

University of Houston Clear Lake

Departmental Travel Authorization Form
(for travel beginning 01/01/2021)

* See instruction tab for instructions and more information

* Traveler Name - First: ___________________ M.I.: _____ Last Name: ___________________

Phone Ext: ___________________ * Accounts Payable Vendor ID#: ___________________

Title of traveler: ______________________________________________________

Traveler's email: ______________________________________________________

Department: ______________________________________________________

Check one:
- Foreign Travel ☐
- Domestic Travel ☐

Dates of travel: _____________ to _____________

* If any dates will be spent primarily on non-business activities, specify those here:

______________________________

Destination:

______________________________

Purpose of trip:

______________________________

Benefit to UHCL:

______________________________

Travel PO#: _____________
TA Form Tips cont.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Estimated Expenses Worksheet:</th>
<th>* Dept Pay</th>
<th>* Hotel TAP Card</th>
<th>Reimburse Traveler</th>
<th>* UHCL Pay Directly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>* Airfare</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>* Lodging</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>* Meals</td>
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<tr>
<td>* Mileage - # of Miles</td>
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<tr>
<td>* Rental Car/Taxi</td>
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<tr>
<td>* Parking</td>
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<tr>
<td>* Conference Registration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Others (specify):</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

**Estimated Expenses Sub-Total:** $0.00

Grand Total: $0.00

Use the Sub-Total for encumbrance consideration. The Grand Total includes items paid by department which do not need to be encumbered.

- [ ] * Check here for approved excess lodging
- [ ] * Check here if overages of 10% or less are pre-approved
The department enters the account code, cost center, speed type, dollar amount approved.

If the Department is limiting the funds for travel to the dollar amount entered, the check box should be checked.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SIGNATURE APPROVALS</th>
<th>I have read and understand the UHCL Travel Guidelines, available at: <a href="http://www.uhcl.edu/travel/resources">www.uhcl.edu/travel/resources</a></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Traveler:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business Administrator:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dean/Department Head:</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Office of Sponsored Programs:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Foreign Travel Approval</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>President, Sr. VP/Provost, or VP for traveler’s division</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signature</td>
<td>Date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signature</td>
<td>Date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Send copies to Traveler, Business Administrator and:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Detailed Changes in Process:

1) The department enters the Account Code on the TA form (Travel used to do this).
2) The CBA/DBA signature on the TA is optional as their official approval will be in PS Finance when they approve and dispatch the Travel PO.
3) The department encumbers the funds for the travel and uploads the approved TA and supporting documents to the Travel PO in PS Finance.
4) The department sends a copy of the Travel PO to the traveler when they send the approved TA copy.
5) The only instances where the department will send the approved TA to the Travel Office is when any of the following requests are made:
   a. Airfare purchase (itinerary must be included);
   b. Car reservation and/or direct pay;
   c. Hotel TAP card;
   d. Foreign Travel assistance (information regarding required documents); or
   e. Any other special request.
5) To be clear, the Travel Office will not encumber when any of the above requests are made, they only handle the specific requests.
**In Summary – Responsible Parties**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Traveler/Department</th>
<th>Travel Office</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Completes TA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acquires Approval Signatures</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Encumbers funds on Travel PO (choose designee and a backup)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stores TA within department</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contacts Travel Office if Airfare, Car Rental, Hotel TAP card, or other assistance is needed.</td>
<td>If requested: Purchases Airfare/Car Rental Issues Hotel TAP card</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Submits Expense Report within 60 days to the Travel Office with Travel PO # and supporting documentation included</td>
<td>Audits Expense Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reimburses Traveler</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Q & A

Q. What if someone travels without having an approved TA on file with their department?

A. This process has not changed.

Traveling without an approved TA on file will require the Head of Department send a memo/email to the Associate VP Finance explaining why Travel Guidelines were not followed and how the Department plans to prevent this from occurring in the future.
Q & A cont.

Q. Does this new TA process affect submitting an expense report for approved travel?

A. Not much. The Travel PO # instead of the T # must be added to the expense report.

Q. What if the department enters an incorrect account code on the TA? Will it affect reimbursement?

A. No
Q & A cont.

Q. What happens if the department forgets to change the Business Unit to TR759 when encumbering the funds?

A. The Travel Office will have to cancel the PO and the department will have to create the Travel PO using TR759.

*Tip – Travel PO #s will be lower in sequence than regular PO #s.

Example: Travel PO # 0000000905
Reg. PO # 0000044505
Q & A cont.

Q. Will the traveler/department still need to submit supporting documents with the expense report if supporting documents were uploaded to the Travel PO in PeopleSoft?

A. Yes, as actual expenses may vary from the estimates.

Q. Do I need to enter more than one account code on the TA?

A. No
Q & A cont.

Q. What amount on the TA is to be encumbered?
A. Use the “Approved Amount to Encumber” from the TA.

Q. If the department encumbers the funds on a Travel PO, but the traveler spends less than the encumbered funds, how will the excess funds be released back into the cost center?
A. The Travel Office will release funds as soon as all expenses have been paid.
Questions?
Online Resources

PeopleSoft Security Access Form & Instructions
Texas State Travel Policy
Travel Authorization Form
Travel Authorization FAQs
Travel Authorization Instructions
Travel Expense Report
Travel Office Guidelines
Travel Purchase Order Instructions
UHCL Travel Office
UH SAM 03.A.03 - Business Travel
UH System Account Listing
UH System Food & Entertainment Related Account-Fund Restrictions
Contact Information

- UHCL Travel Office Website

- UHCL Travel Office Staff:
  - Rosie Pineda, Director Accounts Payable
  - Leanne Howell, Accounting Specialist
  - Melissa Hernandez, Accounting Technician
  - Norma Villanueva, Accounting Technician

- Email: TravelOffice@uhcl.edu

- Phone: 281-283-2270

*Kindly direct all questions to the above email account and phone number.*
Thank you
Have a safe journey